



Tire and Rubber  
Association  
of Canada

L'Association  
canadienne du pneu  
et du caoutchouc

March 11, 2018

## **TRAC Response to CBC Enquiry Re: Tire Warranty Claims**

### **Q: How does your association respond to the contention that these warranty mileage claims are simply a marketing ploy to sell tires and that consumers are being misled?**

In regard to warranty claims, tire manufacturers position mileage warranty claims on their tires to signal to consumers what consumers might reasonably expect under normal service conditions. Consumers are not being misled.

A warranty is essentially a contract between the tire manufacturer and the consumer who has purchased the tires, and what a warranty covers and its exclusions are dependent specifically on the warranty terms; therefore, no generalizations can be made with respect to warranties, their coverages or their exclusions as such are dependent on the manufacturer and relevant products.

The Association understands and believes that their tire manufacturer members stand behind the warranties they have provided to consumers and any questions related to should be directed to a manufacturer with specificity as to product and date of purchase.

In regard to tire tread life, the reality is that no two consumers have the same driving experience. Tire manufacturers make assumptions regarding ratios of city/highway driving. Road surface structures also vary from gravel, to concrete, to various asphalt aggregate compositions, some of which may be more abrasive to tires than others.

Drivers' habits also play a significant role when it comes to tire wear, i.e. aggressive handling and braking contribute to premature wear; and drivers with high city use with many stops, starts and turns are likely to see lower tire mileage from that of a highway commuter. In addition, tire maintenance, maintaining correct air pressure, and regular tire rotation are important factors, as well as vehicle mechanical maintenance such as alignment and suspension components. Any single, or a combination, of these factors will contribute to higher wear rates which will result in a shortfall to the mileage warranty claims.

Finally, the safe operating tread depth is deemed to be 2/32nds of remaining tread, so drivers must consider that removal before this tread depth will result in unused mileage and a shortfall to the warranty mileage.

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**Q: What does your association say about criticisms that tire warranties are hard to qualify for?**

The consumer should review the warranty policy associated with their tire purchase, as every manufacturer has different warranty claims policies. Consumers are also encouraged to maintain adequate records such as maintenance logs and tire rotations to help support their warranty claim. Lack of this information is likely to be the biggest obstacle with qualifying for a warranty claim. In many cases, a tire service professional will be able to assist with making a claim on a manufacturer's mileage warranty.

**Q: Lastly, what are your members prepared to do to ensure that tire tread-life representations are reliable? A consumer advocate says there should be an industry standard that would certify the mileage claims made by a manufacturer, instead of tire companies creating their own tread-wear measures. Is this something your members would consider?**

Tire life warranties are reliable based on normal service conditions as deemed by the manufacturer, and consumers need to understand that many factors are at play that may result in a shortfall to expected tire mileage.

Regarding an industry standard, in the USA, NHTSA is scheduled to propose rulemaking in 2019 that will provide consumers with more information about tread wear ratings. Canada will likely follow suit once this is in place in the USA.